

I know that we all pray that the day will come when we may be able, as it is said in the Scriptures, to beat our swords into ploughshares and spears into pruning hooks. But the news we hear and read each day of the struggle now going on in Viet Nam is a sad and fateful reminder that that day has not yet arrived. We may conclude from the occurrences there, and from the situation in other parts of the world, that our hope for a lasting peace with justice in this troubled world depends upon our remaining strong.

When I spoke here a year ago on Veterans Day, our commitments in Viet Nam had not flared into open warfare, but I mentioned that the peace we were enjoying was an uneasy one. Events which have occurred since that time have proven what an uneasy peace it was. And indeed, the threat of an even more destructive war — a war with nuclear weapons, too horrible almost to contemplate hovers over us constantly.

About the war we are fighting in Viet Nam, let me say that I was distressed, as I know other Americans were distressed, that conditions in that part of the world deteriorated to the point that it became necessary that we send fighting forces there to stem the tide of communist aggression. Americans have deplored all wars, this one included, but it is a characteristic of our people that when our freedom is challenged by a hostile force, as it is being challenged in Southeast Asia today, we rise to meet the challenge with all the strength and all the resources at our disposal. And while there has been some dissension and some disagreement as to policy, I know that an overwhelming majority of the American people stand solidly behind our President and our government in the great effort that is being made to prevent the spread of communism in that area of the globe. On this Veterans Day of 1965, we add to the list of heroes of past wars to whom we are paying tribute those valiant men who today are championing the cause of liberty on the battlefields of Viet Nam.

The world situation today is a challenge — a challenge to all of us to display as much courage and heroism as was displayed by the men who fought in the wars of our country. And it is a reminder to all of us that we must be prepared to make the same commitments, the same sacrifices that were made by the veterans of our wars if we expect to preserve the freedom their commitments and their sacrifices made possible for us